1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 There were both "wild" and "village" Veddas even in the days of his youth, and the only difficulty experienced with the old man was in keeping the two classes perfectly distinct in his mind. The following facts were elicited in the course of three interviews, each lasting somewhat less than an hour. He stated that he was just able to walk when he came to the Eastern Province, and that as he grew up he spent much of his time with the Veddas hunting and collecting honey. The [156] Veddas of those days were a merry people, and with a most eloquent gesture the old man showed how they would throw dry leaves into the air and shout and dance for happiness; he said also that they were absolutely truthful. Every Vedda carried a 411 bow and arrows and an axe; more arrows than one were carried, but it was not clear that they only carried two; it seemed that *tudadi*, a word that the old man said was used to describe the number of arrows carried, may have meant a small quantity or may have been a hunting term corresponding to "brace" or "leash." The old man had seen Veddas shoot lying on their backs and holding the bow with their feet, but this was only for amusement and to show their skill, no serious shooting was done in this way. The feathers of peacocks, herons and hawks were especially used in feathering arrows; any of these birds would be shot with an ordinary arrow, and peacock was [262] eaten as was jungle fowl, though no one would eat porcupine or buffalo; for these abstinences he could give no reason. Traps 226 were not used. Fish were eaten, being caught by poisoning the 278 water of pools with the bark of *damba*, *nahapata*, *pusulpatu* (? *Entada scandens*) and the fruit of *timbiri* (*Diospyros embryopteris*) and *kukuruman* (*Adenanthera bicolor*). Pots and bark 415 cloth bags were made and betel pouches of monkey skin, though even then some village Veddas had cloth betel bags, and these occasionally reached the wilder Veddas. Among the village 304 Veddas both sexes bored their ears and the women wore ivory 301 studs in them; whether the women of the wilder groups bored 184 their ears and wore these ornaments was not clear, certainly 372 the men did not. Fire was obtained from two pieces of wood by drilling.

342 The wilder Veddas of those days built no houses but lived
437

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

There are a few Verdas at Panichchenkeni, while near Vakarai still further to the north there is a Verda settlement of considerable size. Some eight miles beyond this are two Verda settlements Parchenai and Nargantonai situated close together. We heard of other smaller settlements of Coast Veddas in the neighbourhood of Batticaloa, but these were not visited as time was short and it appeared that those Verdas we did not see differed in no respect from those we met. We were told that formerly there were Coast Veddas south of Batticaloa and we later discovered that there were, and still are, certain shrines or temples within a few miles of the coast (e.g. at Mandur), which were generally recognised as Vedda shrines at which Veddas especially worshipped. This matter has been alluded to in Chapter VIII, and here it is only necessary to point out that the religion of the Coast Veddas is strongly tinged with Tamil customs and beliefs; indeed, many Verdas had Hindu sect marks upon their foreheads.

Some, but not all, of the Coast Veddas know the names of the *waruge* to which they belong, and a few also know the names of some of the more important *waruge* of the Veddas inland. Uru *waruge* appears to be the *waruge* to which most of the Coast Veddas who remembered their ancestral *waruge* belonged, but a few men stated that they belonged to Ogatam, Kavatam, Umata or Umatam, Aembalaneduwe and Aembale *waruge*; the last named and the one before it probably being the same as the Aembela *waruge* found inland. Some of the Coast Veddas whom we questioned said they had heard of, and still knew of certain of the old Vedda *waruge*, and such men were generally able to mention Morane *waruge* while fewer also knew of Unapane *waruge*.

The Coast Veddas have become expert fishermen and make and use various forms of nets including a cast net. They also spear and shoot fish, using a bifid iron spear-head which they have adopted from the Tamils. For shooting fish they use the usual Vedda bow, but the arrow has become a harpoon with a shaft as long as the bow into which the iron with its running line fits loosely. One of the nets used by the Coast Veddas is seen drying behind the house in the background of Plate LXIX,

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

262 bears, leopards, and jackals; and all birds, except the wild or domestic fowl. They will not touch lizards, bats, or snakes.*

They can assign no reason for their abstinence from the flesh of those beasts and birds which I have enumerated, but their objection to beef and fowls, though quite unexplained is decidedly the most marked, so much so that during my inquiries, I found that they spontaneously expressed their antipathy, though it required cross-examination to elicit the fact that they also avoid the other kinds of flesh.

They do not scruple to eat animals which have died a natural death, and have (in common with the Kandyans) a decided preference for their game "high"—if so mild a term can describe the exceedingly advanced condition, in which venison should be to suit the palate of a Veddah (or Kandyan) epicure.

226 They are fond of fish, which they catch by mixing with the water the juice of particular fruits and barks of trees, which stupify them. A similar practice is common among the Singhalese.

224 Their arrows procure for them the flesh of the animals they eat, and I can find no trace of pit-falls or traps being in use among 231 them. In Bintenne, some of them employ the hunting buffalo to enable them to approach their game unseen.† Their dogs track out the wounded animals, and are also trained to catch the iguano.

223 Tennent is wrong in saying that they procure birds with the bow. They are not good enough shots for that. They catch them with bird-lime, made from the juice of the bo-tree (*ficus* [824] *religiosa*)—and also watch them to their nests, and take them at night. Their skill as marksmen is most indifferent, and they never exercise it at small objects.

224 The most choice food, in their estimation, is, of land animals, the flesh of the pengolin, or of the iguano; and, of fish, the eel. [262] Though they eat no part of the elephant, yet he is the object of their pursuit, both for their own protection and on account of [439] the ivory, so valuable to them as an article of barter. They will steal up to an elephant, and, as he is in the act of stepping for-

* It is curious that, while in the Batticaloa district Veddahs are said to eat bats, those of the Badulla district—certainly of Nilgala—reject them.

† The use of the hunting buffalo is common all over the island. The manner in which the animal is trained is curious. When its horns are young and tender, a string is tied tightly round the base of one of them. The pain thus produced is so acute, that the poor animal is easily guided by the cord, and answers to the slightest touch. The ligature is gradually relaxed; and, when the buffalo is full grown, the recollection of the pain it occasioned is so vivid that he will answer readily to a thin string tied loosely to his horn. With an animal so trained, the hunter can easily approach the deer unseen at night. The buffalo feeds; the hunter crouches under his lee; a touch will guide him, and the hunter advances under cover.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

524 According to my authority the Veddas indulged in no games, unless, indeed, the custom of tossing dry leaves in the air and speculating on their position when they fell back upon the ground could be called a game. This, I am told, was only an occasional recreation, and indulged in by boys alone.

423 614 628 The limits of the hunting ground were jealously guarded by the Veddas, and anything like poaching by the members of one clan in the area recognized as belonging to another was punishable by death. Should a hunter lose his way and fall into the hands of a neighbouring clan, he would be closely watched, remaining for the time being in a sort of captivity. If the man's conduct during that time was such as to disarm suspicion he was permitted to go, and might even be accompanied to the confines of the clan's hunting ground, but he would have to proceed at once without looking back, or his conduct might lead to the belief that he was a spy, with fatal consequences.

●226 The method of fishing was to hem in a piece of water by closely fencing in both ends of the stream. People would then enter the enclosed piece of water, armed with slender sticks, thrashing the water therewith till a fish was actually struck, when it would be captured. I saw this actually done in one pool on the Kumbukkan.

173 My informant told me that the Veddas were at one time harassed by a race of pygmy people, called the Nittawo, who lived in the country known as Lenama, that extended from Bagura in the Panawa Pattu in the east to the confines of the Kattaragama hills on the west.

According to him, these people lived in small troops of from 10 to 40, inhabiting caves, hollow trees, and crevices of precipices. They were about 3 feet or a little more in height, exactly like normal human beings, only in miniature. Their legs were hairy like those of the Wanduroo; they walked erect, and had no tails.

Their arms were short and very powerful, with strong hands, and talon-like finger-nails with which they tore and disembowelled whatever they captured. These generally were small animals, such as hare, mouse-deer, monkeys, iguanas, and tortoises. Their method of attack was by surrounding

8: Spittel D-8 (ca. 1920) 1948 AX8 Vedda AX8

224 descend; while two or three others, with perhaps a dog, beat the jungle above and start the animal, which is shot almost at the point of the guns.

267 224 There is no flesh the Vedda loves more than that of the wanderoo (grey langur). He will sometimes be seen to halt by a tree, and strike its trunk three resounding blows with his axe-head. This is to discover the whereabouts of the wanderoo. On hearing the sound, these animals, imagining it to be that of a falling tree or rock, give vent to the "a-he-hik" so characteristic of them when startled.

257 [482] One afternoon Suthu Banda brought in a great langur slung on his shoulder, with its tail rove through its slit cheek. Within twenty-five minutes not a morsel of the animal remained. Disjointing the tail at the root, he dissected up a strip of dorsal skin in continuation of it as far as the neck; twisting this over a branch, he suspended and rapidly skinned the quarry. The meat was cut up in pieces and placed on large logs over a fire, the flames licking them all round. Bony segments, such as the spine, ribs and limbs, were pounded on a stone when half burnt, and then replaced on embers. The stomach and entrails were slit open and their contents merely scooped away with the fingers, and roasted. No water whatever was used! It was a truly sickening sight to see the relish with which the intestines with adherent faecal matter 262 were greedily eaten. When we remarked on the repulsiveness of it, the gluttonous epicure calmly remarked, "Yes, the filth gets eaten right enough. What of it? It is good medicine. If you get a wanderoo what haven't you got? No marriage is like it." How true is the saying that the pig and the Vedda are one!

226 824 Fish* abound in the forest streams, all bony and very indifferent to the taste. The Veddas catch these, not with rods or nets, but with poisons. The fruit, bark or root of certain trees† is smashed up and thrown into pools or banked waterways. The water is then stirred; as it gets stained the fish become restless, and leap on to the bank, or turn belly upwards stupefied. They are collected and boiled with a [251 252] little salt and a few chillies and eaten at once, or dried over a trestle like meat.

222 Let us see what sort of fare the jungle trees provide. Of fruit there is plenty in season:—*Mora*, *kong*, *galsembela*, *veera*, *palu*, *damba*, jak, guavas, *ulkantha*, *hibutoo*, *bulanga*, *kothalanga*, *leyaneya*, *karambe*, *madu* never eaten raw because it causes giddiness and vomiting!). The cabbages of palms such as *inthibuda* and *kitulalla*. Yams:—*Gonala*, [261] *katuala*, *kirathala*, *alalla*, in order of preference. Then there are the various barks they chew incessantly to stay the hunger of their long fasts:—*Demata*, *bolvilla* and *thambola*, all substitutes for betel; and *davata* for arecanut; and besides these the barks of *opulu*, *galsembela*, *mora*, *kabatha*, *nuga*, *kalawa*, *galkara*, and in fact anything, however, insipid, provided it is not poisonous.

757 752 Their medicines are few. There is *gonkuttudalu* which they crush up with water and apply to the head for headaches; *meelalla-pothu* which they smash up with *chunam* and use as a dressing for wounds; but for abrasions of the foot they will as soon rub in a little sand with

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* *W'alapotho, angulwe, lulu, katukanae, kawupatho, anitho* (cola), *magwe, kunge, kehaliye, pethy, walikondo, atthalu, badapathale, walihairiye, pinivaliye, kovalaye, galpanduruwe.*

† *Kukurumang-gedde, kala-mul, thimbiri-gedde, dhamba-pathu, pussal-mul.*